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UNCLAS KABUL 000213

DEPARTMENT FOR SRAP, SCA/FO, SCA/A, EUR/RPM  
STATE PASS TO AID FOR ASIA/SCAA  
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SENSITIVE  
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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: U.S. - ITALIAN COOPERATION IN AFGHANISTAN'S HERAT PROVINCE

¶1. SUMMARY Italian Ambassador to Afghanistan Claudio Glaentzer told Coordinating Director for Development and Economic Affairs (CDDEA) Ambassador Wayne January 19 that Italy was prepared to support funding of the 330 km "east-west" road, specifically the Chesti Sharif to Chagcharan portion. Glaentzer said Italy could contribute \$41 million paid in installments (with no guarantee of an annual appropriation but with a good faith effort) and with the stipulation that the money be given to GiROA in support of a national Afghan program. Glaentzer also told Wayne that the draft MOU on Life Support to U.S. civilians located at Italian-run installations in Afghanistan was still under consideration by the Italian MOD. Glaentzer, Wayne and USAID Afghanistan Mission Director William Frej reviewed development priorities in western Afghanistan and discussed possibilities for U.S. - Italian coordination and collaboration. (End Summary)

Participants:

U.S.  
Ambassador Wayne  
USAID Mission Director William Frej  
CDDEA Katherine Hadda  
IPA Jane Messenger, Notetaker

Italy  
Ambassador Glaentzer

Italians Support Road Construction in Herat

¶2. Ambassador Glaentzer said the Italians are committed to supporting the construction of roads in Herat and western Afghanistan, particularly the 330 km road from Herat through Chesti Sharif to Chagcharan. Specifically, the Italians are committed to participating in the construction of the Chesti Sharif to Chagcharan portion. Glaentzer said Italy could contribute \$41 million with the following conditions:

-- They will pay in installments. Cannot guarantee an annual appropriation but they will do their best.

-- The money must be given to GiROA for support of a national Afghan program.

¶3. Glaentzer underscored that the road was important for both military and business reasons, including to provide a route to market for Herat marble. Ambassador Wayne noted that the Afghan Minister of Public Works was planning to hold a donor conference on roads soon. In addition to Italian and U.S. involvement, it made sense to include the Indians and the Japanese who have expressed interest. Glaentzer suggested including the Saudis since they have the presidency of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), which has contributed significant funds to the construction of a portion of the Herat ring road. Ambassador Wayne said that the Asian Development Bank (ADB) should also be included since they are involved in a joint ADB-U.S. Army Corps of Engineers project in

Badghis and Faryab. USACE will supervise the construction of the Ring Road in these two provinces and it will be funded by the ADB's \$340 million.

14. Glaentzer also noted that Italy had agreed to fund 40 km of the Bamyan-Kabul road, although they had recently done a solicitation for bids and received no credible response. They had also discovered that the 11 cm of asphalt they were using was not enough to accommodate heavy trucks carrying marble. They had told the Afghans that their budget did not allow them to fund the entire leg at greater than 11 cm so they offered a choice of doing a shorter piece of road with thicker asphalt or the entire leg with the 11 cm. The Afghans chose the entire leg with the 11 cm. Note: later in the day, Minister of Mines Shahrani said the Indians had indicated they might pay for the unpaved road from the dam they are constructing near Chesti Sharif to the Herat area.

#### Draft MOU on Life Support

15. Ambassador Wayne reiterated our hope that the Italian MOD will move quickly to approve the draft Memorandum of Understanding on life support for U.S. civilians located at Italian-operated facilities in Afghanistan. Glaentzer said the document was still in Rome but that he would check on where it stood.

#### Politics/Development in Herat

16. Ambassador Wayne asked Glaentzer if he thought there would be a change of governor in Herat. Glaentzer said he had heard from IDLG Director Popal that Governor Nuristani was not on the list of 14 that had to be changed. Ambassador Wayne then briefed Glaentzer on U.S. collaboration with the IDLG on district support mechanisms and the development of a basic package of services for the 80 key districts identified by IJC. Wayne told Glaentzer that in Helmand, the U.S. will collaborate with the UK to finance this package (through the Afghan MOF) in several districts. Wayne offered to share our thinking on district development with the Italians so they could consider doing something similar in the key districts near Herat.

#### Development Priorities

17. Mission Director Frej informed Glaentzer that USAID was sending senior official Mike Greene to RC-W, and suggested that Greene call on the Ambassador soon. Glaentzer welcomed enhanced U.S. - Italian collaboration on development projects. In addition to roads, Italy has been focused on health, especially hospitals. They have bought equipment for a regional hospital in Herat and have sponsored a burn hospital in Kabul for women who attempt suicide. They had a similar hospital in Baghlan, but are seeking other sponsors for it in order to better focus on Kabul and Herat. Italy has donated 300 million euros worth of medicine. There are also private hospitals run by "Emergency", an Italian NGO, including in Kabul, Lashkar Gah and Panjshir and 33 clinics around the country, but these are often cash-strapped and have no affiliation with the Italian government. The Italian Embassy is thinking of channeling funds to them through the Afghanistan Ministry of Health. Frej noted that the USG provides \$236 million to the Ministry of Health to support health care delivery throughout the country. Glaentzer invited us to visit the Emergency Hospital in Kabul in early February.

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